

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 095 142

SP 008 320

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TITLE Modular Sequence: English as a Second Language, Methods and Techniques. TTP 001.14 Teaching ESI in Context. Teacher Corps Bilingual Project.
INSTITUTION Hartford Univ., West Hartford, Conn. Coll. of Education.
NOTE 9p.; For related documents, see SP 008 306-319 and 321
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.75 HC-\$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Bilingual Education; Cultural Background; Cultural Context; *English (Second Language); Grammar; *Performance Based Teacher Education; *Second Language Learning; *Spanish Speaking; Students; *Teacher Education; Textbook Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS *Learning Modules

ABSTRACT

Given the series of activities included in this module on the importance of cultural context in the teaching of second languages, the participant should be able to: (a) prepare a culturally relevant grammatical exercise for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish-speakers, (b) list several possible activities for using the learner's cultural background in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom, and (c) evaluates the relevance of the cultural context in existing materials available for Spanish/English bilingual programs. The module includes short-essay pre- and post-assessment of the participant and learning alternatives, which are presented in outline form. Specific readings are assigned for each activity. A bibliography ends the module.
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MODULAR SEQUENCE:
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

TTP 001.14 TEACHING ESL
IN CONTEXT

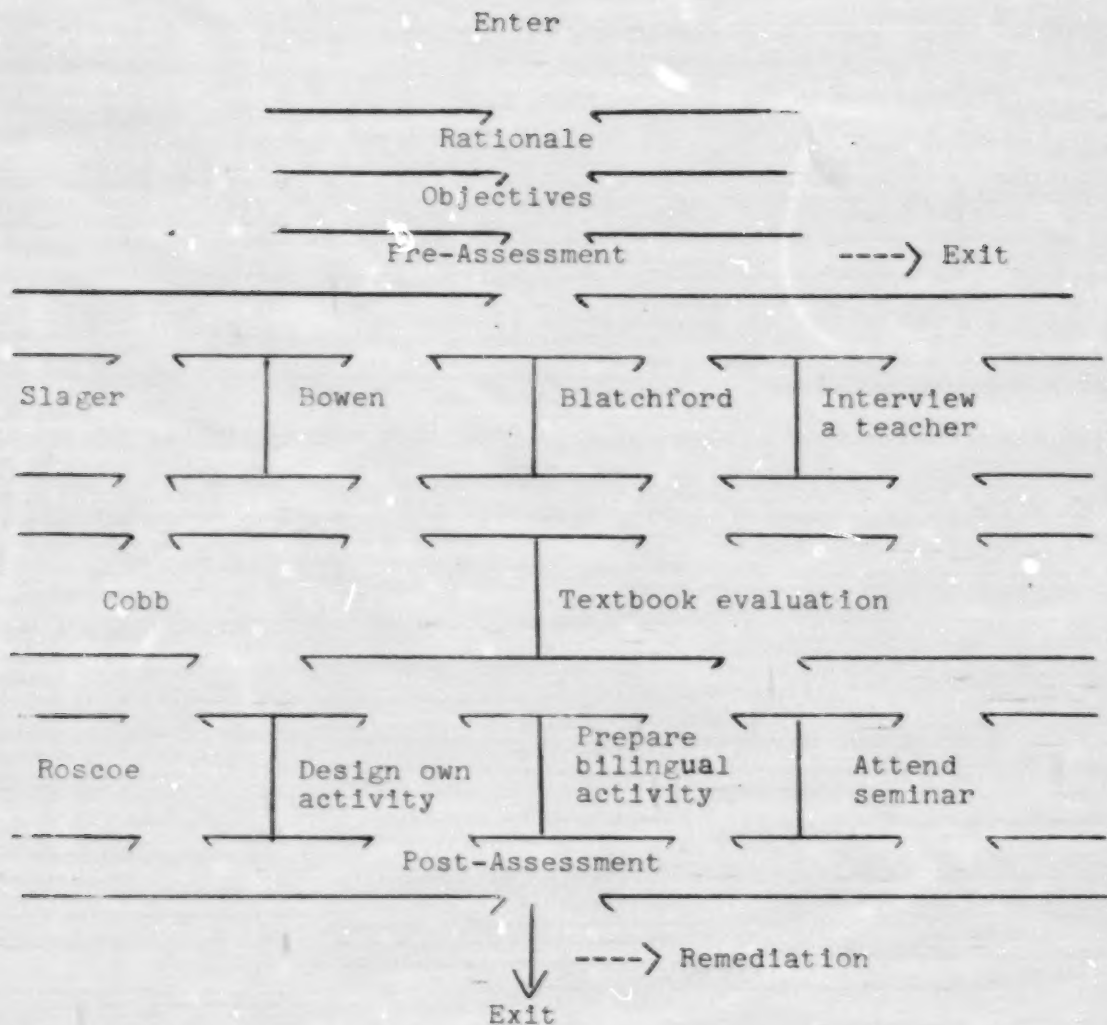
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SP008.320

TEACHING ESL IN CONTEXT



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RATIONALE

It is important to remember that language is tightly interlaced with culture and cannot be taught in a vacuum. Just as language is used in contextual situations by its native speakers, so must it be taught in the classroom.

This unit of work will provide the participant with practical classroom suggestions for teaching ESL in a cultural context.

OBJECTIVES

Given a series of activities on the importance of cultural context in the teaching of second languages, the participant will be able to:

- prepare a culturally relevant grammatical exercise for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish-speakers.
- list several possible activities for using the learner's cultural background in the ESL classroom.
- evaluate the relevancy of the cultural context in existing materials available for Spanish/English bilingual programs.

PRE-ASSESSMENT

To assess your prior mastery of the terminal objectives of this unit of work, complete the following exercise. Your performance on this assessment will determine which learning tasks you are to perform.

Directions: Answer the following in short essays:

- I. Discuss various possibilities open to the ESL teacher for using the learner's cultural background in teaching the target language.
- II. At present, approximately 7,000 native Spanish-speaking children are in the city of Hartford, Connecticut, schools. This number represents 23% of the total school enrollment of the community. The children face the problems of how to understand and be understood by those around them, and how to live in a strange environment. How can an ESL teacher working in this community help solve these problems?
- III. Prepare a culturally relevant grammatical exercise for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish-speakers.
- IV. Evaluate the relevancy of the cultural context in existing materials available for Spanish/English bilingual programs.

Learning alternatives:

I. Select one of the following:

A. Read:

William R. Slager, "Creating Contexts for Language Practice," TESOL Quarterly VII (March, 1973), 35-50.

Activity: Following Slager's guidelines, prepare a short lesson for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish-speakers which combines grammar and context, structure and situation.

B. Read:

J. Donald Bowen, "Contextualizing Pronunciation Practice in the ESL Classroom," TESOL Quarterly VI (March, 1972), 83-94.

Activity: Design a short pronunciation exercise for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish-speakers. Follow Bowen's suggestions for contextualization.

C. Read:

Charles H. Blatchford, "Newspapers: Vehicles for Teaching E.S.O.L. with a Cultural Focus," TESOL Quarterly VII (June, 1973), 145-151.

Activity: Prepare an intermediate level ESL activity using the newspaper as the medium of instruction.

D. Interview a teacher to determine specific guidelines for contextualizing the teaching of ESL. Prepare a teaching activity based on the teacher's suggestions.

II. Select one of the following:

A. Read:

Martha K. Cobb, "Multi-Ethnic Materials in Second Language Programs Classrooms," TESOL Quarterly V (March, 1971), 19-37.

Activity: Outline an inventory of "Multi-Ethnic Materials" for a specific classroom of second-language learners.

- B. With a specific ESL class in mind, select one lesson from an ESL textbook. Determine what contextual modifications would be necessary to make it more relevant to your class.

III. Select one of the following:

A. Read:

Carole Roscoe, "Developing Instructional Materials for a Bilingual Program," TESOL Quarterly VI (June, 1972), 163-166.

Activity: Visit your local Bilingual and ESL Curriculum Centers. Do the materials available there meet the needs of your local ethnic communities?

- B. Design your own learning activity.

- C. Prepare a bilingual exercise for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish students based on the attached guidelines.

- D. Attend a seminar as scheduled by your module coordinator.

POST-ASSESSMENT

Directions: Answer the following in short essays:

- I. Discuss various possibilities open to the ESL teacher for using the learner's cultural background in teaching the target language.
- II. At present, approximately 7,000 native Spanish-speaking children are in the city of Hartford, Connecticut, schools. This number represents 23% of the total school enrollment of the community. The children face the problems of how to understand and be understood by those around them, and how to live in a strange environment. How can an ESL teacher working in this community help solve these problems?
- III. Prepare a culturally relevant grammatical exercise for a specific group of Puerto Rican Spanish-speakers.
- IV. Evaluate the relevancy of the cultural context in existing materials available for Spanish/English bilingual programs.

Competency will be certified when your module coordinator has ascertained that the submitted post-assessment is of acceptable quality.

Remediation: Alternate learning activities are available on a contractual basis with the module coordinator.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bowen, J. Donald, "Contextualizing Pronunciation Practice in the E.S.L. Classroom," TESOL Quarterly VI (March, 1972).
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